

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12
NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08
OMB-01 TRSE-00 OIC-02 /135 W
-----016351 211923Z /41

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FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2428
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 11304

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, ECOSOC
SUBJECT: 1978 SUMMER ECOSOC - AGENDA ITEM 35: ENLARGE-
MENT OF UNHCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND REPORT OF THE HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

REF: STATE 181373

1. SUMMARY - AT ITS PLENARY SESSION JULY 21, THE COUNCIL
ADOPTED BY CONSENSUS THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR EN-
LARGEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COM-
MISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (HCR) BY UP TO NINE MEMBERS. US
AND OTHER DELEGATIONS WERE NOT ABLE TO SECURE CHANGES IN
THE TEXT, BUT MADE CLEAR TO REPS OF THE HCR'S OFFICE OUR
STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE EXPANSION AND OUR DIS-
PLEASURE OVER THE LACK OF ADEQUATE CONSULTATIONS AND
NEGOTIATIONS ON THE FINAL TEXT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN VIEW OF ABSENCE OF HARTLING DURING THE PAST
WEEK, US RE-ITERATED CONCERNS TO OTHER REPS OF THE HCR'S
OFFICE (E.G. DE HAAU) OVER EXPANSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COM-
MITTEE. WE ALSO EXPRESSED TO THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION
OUR STRONG OBJECTIONS OVER THE LACK OF ADEQUATE CONSULTA-
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TIONS ON THE FINAL TEXT. THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION
TABLED THEIR TEXT, SLIGHTLY REVISED, SHORTLY AFTER CIRCU-
LATING IT TO INTERESTED DELEGATIONS, AND WITHOUT AWAITING
ANY REACTIONS FROM WESTERN DELEGATIONS WHO HAD EARLIER
EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS OVER THE EXPANSION ISSUE. THE DELS
OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND ALSO MADE SIMILAR APPROACH-
ES. THE UK, HAVING RECEIVED FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO GO

ALONG WITH THE INCREASE TO FORTY, DID NOT EXPRESS ANY FURTHER COMPLAINTS. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE TEXT WAS CIRCULATED AS AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT, AND SINCE WE DID NOT WISH TO OPEN UP A PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE ISSUE BY PRESENTING FORMAL AMENDMENTS, ALL DELEGATIONS AGREED TO GO ALONG WITH THE TEXT AS TABLED.

3. THE RESOLUTION WAS INTRODUCED IN THE PLENARY BY THE AMBASSADOR OF THE NETHERLANDS WHOSE STATEMENT INCLUDED COMMENT THAT THE FEELING IS INCREASINGLY EXPRESSED THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR ADAPTATION AND NEED TO EXPAND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE CONTINUITY OF MEMBERSHIP IS A POSITIVE FACTOR IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE AND THAT THE CURRENT MEMBERS SHOULD CONTINUE IN OFFICE. NO OTHER SPEAKERS TOOK THE FLOOR AND THE RESOLUTION WAS QUICKLY ADOPTED, WITHOUT A VOTE. AS NOTED BELOW, THE FRENCH DELEGATION EXPRESSED ITS RESERVATIONS ON THE TEXT AFTER ADOPTION. USDEL MADE NO STATEMENT.

4. FOLLOWING ADOPTION OF THE DUTCH RESOLUTION, THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL PROPOSED THAT THE COUNCIL ADOPT A DECISION TAKING NOTE OF THE REPORT OF THE HCR, A STRICTLY PROCEDURAL MOVE. THE DEL OF THE USSR, HOWEVER, ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION OF THIS PROPOSAL AND SUGGESTED THAT SINCE THE REPORT OF THE HCR WAS LINKED TO ANOTHER AGENDA ITEM, ITEM 6 PERTAINING TO REFUGEES IN THE OGADEN, THERE SHOULD BE SOME COMMENTS ON THE REPORT BEFORE ADOPTION OF ANY DECISION
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WHICH WOULD CLOSE THIS ITEM. THIS COMMENT WAS FOLLOWED BY A SERIES OF DELEGATION STATEMENTS COMMENDING THE HCR FOR HIS REPORT AND SOME COMMENTS ON THE RES. JUST ADOPTED CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. THE COUNCIL EVENTUALLY DECIDED TO LEAVE OPEN THE ITEM ON THE REPORT OF THE HCR, IN VIEW OF ITS RELATIONSHIP TO AGENDA ITEM 6.

5. STATEMENTS IN THIS SHORT DEBATE INCLUDED AN INTERVENTION BY THE HCR, HARTLING, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION BY THE USSR ASKING WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WAS BEING DONE FOR THE PERSONS DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF THE EVENTS IN THE ETHIOPIA/SOMALIA BORDER REGION. THE HCR CITED HIS APPEAL TO ALL GOVERNMENTS TO HELP DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE OGADEN; STATED THAT OVER \$10 MILLION HAD BEEN CONTRIBUTED TO DATE FOR PROGRAMS IN DJIBOUTI, SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA AND THAT PROGRAMS WERE BEING CARRIED OUT IN FULL CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED. THE HCR ALSO COMMENTED THAT WITH RESPECT TO THE RES ON EXPANSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, HE REALIZED THAT MORE THAN ONE VIEW COULD BE EXPRESSED IN CONSULTATIONS AND HE THANKED THOSE DELEGATIONS WHICH JOINED IN THE CONSENSUS. FOLLOWING THIS STATEMENT,

THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE DELIVERED AN EXPLANATION OF VOTE SAYING THEY DID NOT OPPOSE THE CONSENSUS BECAUSE THEY WERE IN FAVOR OF AN INCREASE, BUT THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED AN INCREASE OF FIVE AND THEY HOPE THE MAXIMUM OF NINE WILL NOT BE REACHED. THE FRENCH ALSO STATED THAT ACCESSION TO THE CONVENTION ON THE STATUS OF REFUGEES SHOULD BE A CONDITION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

6. ALSO JOINING IN THE DEBATE WERE ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA BOTH OF WHOM COMPLIMENTED THE HCR FOR HIS REPORT AND BOTH OF WHOM AVOIDED DISCUSSION OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THEIR OWN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 GENEVA 11304

QUARREL. THE ETHIOPIAN DEL STATED THAT THEY WILL PRESENT A DRAFT RESOLUTION UNDER A REVISED AGENDA ITEM 6.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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